

THE SUMMARY OF THE ORNAMENT

The homage and the explanation of the purpose are followed by a summary of the *Ornament* in fifteen verses.

These fifteen verses express the topics of the *Ornament*, which can be summarized into:

- i. the eight clear realizations and
- ii. the seventy topics

The eight clear realizations

Maitreya summarizes the eight clear realizations in two verses:

The Perfection of Wisdom (Sutras)
Are well explained through the eight clear realizations,
The exalted knower of all aspects, the knower of paths,
Then the knower of all (bases), [4]

Completely clear realization of all aspects,
Reaching the peak, gradualism,
Actual complete enlightenment in a single moment,
And the Dharmakaya are the eight aspects. [5]

The meaning of the two verses is:

In the *Ornament* the ***Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*** are well explained through the eight clear realizations: [1] the exalted knower of all aspects, [2] the knower of paths, [3] the knower of all bases, [4] the completely clear realization of all aspects (training in complete aspects), [5] reaching the peak (peak training), [6] gradualism (gradual training), [7] actual complete enlightenment in a single moment (training in a single instant), and [8] the resultant Dharmakaya – those eight are the eight aspects, i.e. the eight clear realizations.

Therefore the eight clear realizations (i.e. paths) are:

- 1) Exalted knower of aspects (the omniscient mind of a Buddha)
- 2) Knower of paths
- 3) Knower of bases
- 4) Training in complete aspects
- 5) Peak training
- 6) Gradual training
- 7) Training in a single instant
- 8) Resultant Dharmakaya

The thirteen verses that list the seventy topics:

Each clear realization is further characterized by different phenomena. For example, the first clear realization, the *exalted knower of aspects*, is characterized or illustrated by ten phenomena. These phenomena are also called topics. Therefore:

- The **first** chapter of the Ornament explains the *exalted knower of aspects* by way of **ten** topics.
- The **second** chapter of the Ornament explains the *knower of paths* by way of **eleven** topics.
- The **third** chapter of the Ornament explains the *knower of bases* by way of **nine** topics.
- The **fourth** chapter of the Ornament explains the *training in complete aspects* by way of **eleven** topics.
- The **fifth** chapter of the Ornament explains the *peak training* by way of **eight** topics.
- The **sixth** chapter of the Ornament explains the *gradual training* by way of **thirteen** topics.
- The **seventh** chapter of the Ornament explains the *training in a single instant* by way of **four** topics.
- The **eighth** chapter of the Ornament explains the *resultant dharmakaya* by way of **four** topics.

In total, the *Ornament* presents seventy topics which is why it is said that the *Ornament* explains the implicit or hidden meaning of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* by way of *eight clear realizations* and *seventy topics*.

The *Ornament* summarizes these seventy topics in thirteen verses:

*The mind generation, the practice instructions,
The fourfold branches of definite distinction,
The foundation of practice -
The nature of the expanse of Dharmas, [6]*

[...]

*Essence, involving Perfect Enjoyment,
Another one like this - Emanation -
And the function of the Dharmakaya
Perfectly express it in four aspects.[18]*

The thirteen verses of the summary merely list the seventy topics.

THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE ORNAMENT

The first chapter of the *Ornament* presents the first of the eight clear realizations, the *exalted knower of aspects*. Thus, the first chapter explains the meaning of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* by way of presenting the omniscient mind. The reason for presenting the omniscient mind in the beginning of the *Ornament* is to generate enthusiasm and interest in the continuum of the trainee. By studying, contemplating, and meditating on the first chapter, trainees generate faith and aspiration to attain the result of the Mahayana path – the omniscient mind of a Buddha. This aspiration in turn motivates them to continue to study, contemplate, and meditate on the remaining chapters of the *Ornament*, which expound the variety of different paths that lead to the enlightened state of a Buddha.

However, instead of explaining the *exalted knower of aspects* itself (its definition, division, and so forth), the first chapter presents the *exalted knower of aspects* by way of presenting ten topics that exemplify or illustrate the *exalted knower of aspects*.

These ten topics are:

1. **Bodhicitta** - Bodhicitta is explained first because it is the entryway to the Mahayana path. It refers to a mental consciousness that aspires to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.
2. **Practice instructions** - Yet aspiring to become enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings is not enough; one needs to engage in the practice of study, contemplation, and meditation on the Mahayana practice instructions given by the Buddha and other masters.
3. **The path of preparation** - Having generated Bodhicitta on the Mahayana path of accumulation and having studied, contemplated, and meditated on emptiness, etc. by relying on the Mahayana practice instructions the Bodhisattva then enters the Mahayana path of preparation. The path of preparation is entered when the practitioner achieves a union of calm abiding and special insight that realizes emptiness conceptually.
4. **Buddha nature/essence/lineage** - The nature of the mind that engages in Mahayana practice is the mind's *lack of true existence*. This lack of true existence of the mental consciousness is called 'Buddha nature' and serves as the basis for Mahayana practice. Having reached the path of accumulation and so forth one is now also able to realize that one possesses Buddha nature.
5. **Objects of focus** - Having explained the basis of Mahayana practice, which is Buddha nature, the *Ornament* proceeds to explain the objects of focus of Mahayana practice.
6. **The three great objectives** - This topic is concerned with the objectives or the purposes of Mahayana practice, i.e. the objectives for studying, contemplating, and meditating on the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras.
7. **Armor-like practice** - Having discussed the basis, objects of focus, and objectives of Mahayana practice, the *Ornament* subsequently explains the actual practice starting with armor-like practice. Armor-like practice deals with the development of the right motivation, which serves as an armor or protection against unfavorable conditions.
8. **Engaged practice** - After the motivation for practice, the engaged practice is explained. Engaged practice is concerned with the development of calm abiding, the six perfections, the Arya paths such as the path of seeing, etc., the four immeasurables and so forth.